International Atomic Energy Agency
GENERAL CONFERENCE

GC

GC(42)/2
22 June 1998

GENERAL Distr.
Original: ENGLISH

PROVISIONAL AGENDA

1. In accordance with Rule 2 of the Rules of Procedure of the General Conference[1], the Director General hereby notifies all Members of the Agency that the forty-second regular session of the General Conference will open at the Austria Center Vienna[2] on Monday, 21 September 1998, at 10 a.m.

2. During the weekend preceding the opening of the Conference's session (Saturday, 19 September and Sunday, 20 September 1998), facilities will be made available for group meetings. Member States are strongly urged to avail themselves of those facilities with a view to achieving early agreement on organizational matters and thereby contributing to the smooth running of the session, ensuring - where necessary - that their representatives arrive in Vienna in time to participate in pre-session group meetings and the associated group decision-making. Meeting rooms may be reserved through the Secretariat's Conference Service Section (tel. no.: + 43 1 2060/21323).

3. Pursuant to Rule 11 of the Conference's Rules of Procedure, the Director General has drawn up the attached provisional agenda for the session in consultation with the Board of Governors. In the annotation to each item a suggestion is made, for consideration by the General Committee, as to where it should first be discussed - in plenary or in a committee.

4. Should the Director General receive by 22 August 1998 any request under Rule 13 for inclusion of a supplementary item in the agenda, such an item will, unless Rule 21 applies, be placed on a list which will be circulated not later than 1 September 1998.

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[1] GC(XXXI)/INF/245/Rev.1.

[2] The Austria Center Vienna is located at Am Hubertusdamm 6, 1220 Vienna, next to the Vienna International Centre.

For reasons of economy, this document has been printed in a limited number. Delegates are kindly requested to bring their copies of documents to meetings. This document is available electronically on Worldatom.

PROVISIONAL AGENDA

1. Election of officers and appointment of the General Committee
2. Applications for membership of the Agency
3. Message from the Secretary-General of the United Nations
4. Statement by the Director General
5. Arrangements for the Conference
   - (a) Adoption of the agenda and allocation of items for initial discussion
   - (b) Closing date of the session and opening date of the next session
   - (c) Criteria or guidelines for consideration of requests for the restoration of voting rights
   - (d) Streamlining the work of the General Conference
6. Contributions to the Technical Co-operation Fund for 1999
7. General debate and Annual Report for 1997
8. Election of Members to the Board of Governors
9. The Agency's accounts for 1997
10. The Agency's programme and budget for 1999 and 2000
11. Scale of assessment of Members' contributions towards the Regular Budget
12. Measures to strengthen international co-operation in nuclear, radiation and waste safety
    - (a) Report on measures to strengthen international co-operation in nuclear, radiation and waste safety
    - (b) Safety of transport of radioactive materials
    - (c) Study of the radiological situation at the Atolls of Mururoa and Fangataufa

13. Strengthening of the Agency's technical co-operation activities

14. Plan for producing potable water economically

15. Strengthening the effectiveness and improving the efficiency of the safeguards system and application of the Model Protocol

16. Measures against illicit trafficking in nuclear materials and other radioactive sources

17. Article VI of the Statute

18. Implementation of the agreement between the Agency and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea for the application of safeguards in connection with the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

19. Implementation of United Nations Security Council resolutions relating to Iraq

20. Israeli nuclear capabilities and threat

21. Application of IAEA safeguards in the Middle East

22. Examination of delegates' credentials

23. Elections to the Agency's Staff Pension Committee

24. Report on contributions pledged to the Technical Co-operation Fund for 1999

ANNOTATIONS

1. Election of officers and appointment of the General Committee[3] *Plenary*

Under Rule 34 of the Rules of Procedure, the General Conference will be called upon to elect a President. The President will propose for election the names of eight Vice-Presidents and the name of a Chairman of the Committee of the Whole. Also, under Rule 40, the Conference is required to appoint a General Committee consisting of the President, the eight Vice-Presidents, the Chairman of the Committee of the Whole and five additional members elected on the proposal of the President.

2. Applications for membership of the Agency *Plenary*

The Conference will have before it a recommendation by the Board of Governors regarding an application for membership of the Agency. Document GC(42)/3 contains a Board recommendation regarding the application by Benin.

3. Message from the Secretary-General of the United Nations *Plenary*

It is expected that a message from the Secretary-General of the United Nations will be delivered.

4. Statement by the Director General *Plenary*

The Director General proposes to make a statement to the Conference.

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[3] As stated in paragraph 2 of the cover note, facilities are being made available for area groups to meet during the weekend preceding the opening of the Conference's session. It is hoped that this measure will help area groups to reach agreement on their nominees for membership of the General Committee before Monday morning so that the work of the Conference can proceed without delay.

5. Arrangements for the Conference

(a) Adoption of the agenda and allocation of items for initial discussion — ***General Committee***

The General Committee is required to report to the Conference under Rule 42(a) on the provisional agenda set forth in the present document and on any supplementary or additional items (Rules 13 and 15). The Conference will then approve the agenda (Rule 14) and allocate the items for initial discussion.

(b) Closing date of the session and opening date of the next session — ***General Committee***

The Conference is required, under Rule 8, to set the closing date of the session and, under Rule 1, to set the opening date of the forty-third (1999) regular session after considering recommendations made by the General Committee.

(c) Criteria or guidelines for consideration of requests for the restoration of voting rights — ***Committee of the Whole***

This sub-item is included pursuant to decision GC(41)/DEC/8.C. adopted by the General Conference last year. The Board of Governors, in document GC(42)/10, recommended to the General Conference the criteria or guidelines which should govern the future consideration of requests for the restoration of voting rights.

(d) Streamlining the work of the General Conference — ***Committee of the Whole***

Under this sub-item the General Conference will have before it recommendations for streamlining the work of the General Conference, which were endorsed by the Board of Governors at its June 1998 session (GC(42)/4).

6. Contributions to the Technical Co-operation Fund for 1999 — ***Plenary***

Member States will be urged to pledge contributions to the Technical Co-operation Fund for 1999 and attention will be drawn to the fact that such pledges of contributions can be made during the session.

7. General debate and Annual Report for 1997 *Plenary*

Under Article V.E.4 of the Statute, the Conference is required to consider the Agency's Annual Report for the year 1997, which the Board has approved (GC(42)/5).

As part of the ongoing efforts to streamline the work of the General Conference, it is recommended that there be a limitation of the time allowed to speakers under this item to 15 minutes in the general debate.

8. Election of Members to the Board of Governors *Plenary*

The Conference will be called upon to elect 11 Members to the Board[4]. Under Rule 83, the President will indicate to the Conference those elective places on the Board which must be filled so as to ensure that after the end of the session the Board will be constituted in accordance with Article VI.A. of the Statute. In document GC(42)/9 the Board informs the Conference of the designations it has made for membership on the Board in 1998-99.

9. The Agency's accounts for 1997 *Committee of the Whole*

In accordance with Rule 12(i), the Agency's accounts for 1997, together with the External Auditor's report thereon and the report of the Board, are being communicated to the Conference in document GC(42)/6.

10. The Agency's programme and budget for 1999 and 2000 *Committee of the Whole*

Under Article V.E.5 of the Statute, the Conference is called upon to approve the Agency's budget for 1999 and a corresponding proposed programme of work in accordance with estimates for the Agency's expenses which the Board, pursuant to Article XIV.A, is submitting to it in document GC(42)/7.

11. Scale of assessment of Members' contributions towards the Regular Budget *Committee of the Whole*

Pursuant to Article XIV.D of the Statute, a proposed scale of assessment of Members' contributions towards the Regular Budget for 1999 will be submitted to the Conference.

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[4] The terms of office of Argentina, Belgium, Colombia, Cuba, Czech Republic, Malaysia, Namibia, New Zealand, Portugal, Tunisia and the United Arab Emirates will expire at the end of this year's regular session (see document GC(40)/RES/DEC/(1996), decision number GC(40)/DEC/9).

12. Measures to strengthen international co-operation in nuclear, radiation and waste safety

(a) Report on measures to strengthen international co-operation in nuclear, radiation and waste safety — *Committee of the Whole*

Under this sub-item, the General Conference will have before it documentation describing the measures being taken by the Agency to strengthen international co-operation in these areas.

(b) Safety of transport of radioactive materials — *Committee of the Whole*

This sub-item is included in the provisional agenda pursuant to resolution GC(41)/RES/12 adopted by the General Conference last year. A report on the implementation of the resolution is before the Conference in document GC(42)/11.

(c) Study of the radiological situation at the atolls of Mururoa and Fangataufa — *Committee of the Whole*

A document containing the Executive Summary of the Main Report of the study is being submitted to the forty-second regular session of the General Conference for its consideration (GC(42)/INF/3).

13. Strengthening of the Agency's technical co-operation activities — *Committee of the Whole*

This item is included in the provisional agenda to enable the Director General to report (in document GC(42)/INF/4) on the implementation of resolution GC(41)/RES/13 as requested in its operative paragraph 7.

14. Plan for producing potable water economically — *Committee of the Whole*

This item is included in the provisional agenda to enable the Director General to report on the implementation of resolution GC(41)/RES/14 as requested in its operative paragraph 7 (GC(42)/1).

15. Strengthening the effectiveness and improving the efficiency of the safeguards system and application of the Model Protocol — *Committee of the Whole*

This item is included in the provisional agenda pursuant to resolution GC(41)/RES/16. The Director General will report to the General Conference on the implementation of the resolution as requested in its operative paragraph 9 (GC(42)/12).

16. Measures against illicit trafficking in nuclear materials and other radioactive sources — ***Committee of the Whole***

This item is included in the provisional agenda to enable the Director General to submit a report to the General Conference as requested in operative paragraph 4 of resolution GC(41)/RES/17.

17. Article VI of the Statute — ***Committee of the Whole***

This item is included in the provisional agenda pursuant to General Conference resolution GC(41)/RES/20 (Amendment of Article VI of the Statute) and decision GC(41)/DEC/10 (Article VI of the Statute).

The Conference will have before it a report dealing with these matters.

18. Implementation of the agreement between the Agency and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea for the application of safeguards in connection with the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons — ***Plenary***

This item is included in the provisional agenda pursuant to operative paragraph 5 of resolution GC(41)/RES/22, in which the General Conference decided last year to remain seized of this matter and to include in the agenda for its forty-second regular session an item with this title.

19. Implementation of United Nations Security Council resolutions relating to Iraq — ***Plenary***

This item is included in the provisional agenda pursuant to resolution GC(41)/RES/23 adopted by the General Conference last year. It is expected that, as requested in operative paragraph 8 of the resolution, the Director General will report to the Conference on his efforts to implement the relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions relating to Iraq.

20. Israeli nuclear capabilities and threat — ***Plenary***

This item has been included in the agenda at the request of Kuwait on behalf of a group of Arab States members of the Agency. An explanatory memorandum, required under Rule 20 of the Rules of Procedure of the General Conference, is contained in document GC(42)/8.

21. Application of IAEA safeguards in the Middle East — ***Plenary***

This item is included in the provisional agenda pursuant to resolution GC(41)/RES/25 adopted by the General Conference last year. It is expected that the Director General will report to the Conference on the implementation of the resolution as requested in its operative paragraph 9.

22. Examination of delegates' credentials — ***General Committee***

Under Rule 28 the General Committee, meeting as a credentials committee, will examine the credentials of all delegates and report thereon to the Conference.

23. Elections to the Agency's Staff Pension Committee — ***Plenary***

It is expected that the Conference will be called upon to elect one or more members to the Agency's Staff Pension Committee.

24. Report on contributions pledged to the Technical Co-operation Fund for 1999 — ***Plenary***

It is expected that pledges of contributions to the Technical Co-operation Fund for 1999 will be obtained during the Conference and that a report thereon will be communicated to the Conference by the President.

International Atomic Energy Agency
GENERAL CONFERENCE

GC

GC(42)/2/Corr.1
7 September 1998

GENERAL Distr.
Original: ENGLISH

Forty-second regular session

PROVISIONAL AGENDA

Corrigendum

The first sentence of the annotation to item number 20 of the Provisional Agenda ("Israeli nuclear capabilities and threat") should be corrected to read as follows:

"This item has been included in the agenda at the request of Kuwait on behalf of Arab States members of the Agency and at the request of Qatar on behalf of the States members of the Organization of the Islamic Conference which are members of the Agency."

For reasons of economy, this document has been printed in a limited number.
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International Atomic Energy Agency
GENERAL CONFERENCE

GC

GC(42)/2/Add.1
19 August 1998

GENERAL Distr.
Original: ENGLISH

Forty-second regular session

PROVISIONAL AGENDA

Supplementary item for inclusion in the provisional agenda

1. On 11 August 1998, the Director General received a request for the inclusion of an item entitled "Nuclear Testing" in the agenda for the forty-second regular session of the General Conference.

2. Pursuant to Rule 13 of the Rules of Procedure[1], the requested item is set out below as a supplementary item:

A. Nuclear Testing

On 11 August 1998, the Director General received a joint request from Australia, Canada, Japan and New Zealand for the inclusion of this item in the agenda for the Conference's forty-second regular session. An explanatory memorandum, required under Rule 20 of the Rules of Procedure of the General Conference, is reproduced overleaf.

[1] GC(XXXI)/INF/245/Rev.1.

For reasons of economy, this document has been printed in a limited number. Delegates are kindly requested to bring their copies of documents to meetings.

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM SUBMITTED JOINTLY BY AUSTRALIA, CANADA, JAPAN AND NEW ZEALAND

Each of our Governments sees the recent nuclear tests carried on by India and then Pakistan as a challenge to the integrity of the global non-proliferation regime and the NPT, the cornerstone of that regime and the essential foundation for the pursuit of nuclear disarmament. These tests are also a challenge to the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, a treaty already signed by 150 Governments around the world. The CTBT was one of the principal objectives endorsed by the thirty-ninth General Conference of the IAEA in 1995 in Resolution GC(39)/RES/23. That resolution explicitly called on all States to desist from further nuclear testing.

This issue was included on the Agenda for the session of the Board of Governors beginning on June 8 of this year and discussed by the Board.

As the Statute of the Agency makes clear, the Agency shall seek to accelerate and enlarge the contribution of atomic energy to peace, health and prosperity throughout the world. The Agency is also enjoined to conduct its activities in accordance with the purposes and principles of the United Nations to promote peace and international co-operation and in conformity with policies of the United Nations furthering the establishment of safeguarded worldwide disarmament and in conformity with any international agreements entered into pursuant to such policies. The Statute further makes clear that the General Conference may discuss any questions or any matters within the scope of this Statute and may make recommendations to the membership of the Agency or to the Board of Governors or to both on any such question or matters.

GC

GC(42)/2/Add.2
15 September 1998
GENERAL Distr.
ENGLISH
Original: ARABIC

International Atomic Energy Agency
GENERAL CONFERENCE

Forty-second regular session

ADDITIONAL ITEM

Request by Kuwait, on behalf of Arab States members of the Agency, to place an additional item on the agenda

Pursuant to a request of the Resident Representative of Kuwait, the text of a letter of 10 September 1998 addressed by him to the Director General, on behalf of Arab States members of the Agency, is attached hereto.

For reasons of economy, this document has been printed in a limited number.
Delegates are kindly requested to bring their copies of documents to meetings.

98-03082

TEXT OF LETTER OF 10 SEPTEMBER 1998 FROM THE RESIDENT REPRESENTATIVE OF KUWAIT TO THE INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY

In the light of Rule 15 of the Rules of Procedures of the General Conference and on behalf of the Arab States that are members of the Agency and that have signed this letter, I kindly request you to take the necessary steps as soon as possible to include an additional item entitled "Participation of Palestine in the Work of the International Atomic Energy Agency" in the agenda of the forty-second regular session of the Agency's General Conference (September 1998) in order to apply to the work of the Agency the substance of the resolution adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 7 July 1998 concerning the granting to Palestine of certain additional privileges and rights relating to its participation in the work of the United Nations.

(signed) Faisal Al-Ghais
Ambassador of the State of Kuwait
Dean of the Arab Diplomatic Corps

LIST OF ARAB STATES REQUESTING THE INCLUSION OF AN ADDITIONAL ITEM ON THE PARTICIPATION OF PALESTINE IN THE WORK OF THE INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY

Name of State	**Head of delegation**	**Signature**
Kuwait	Faisal Rashed Al-Ghais	(signed)
Algeria	Mokhtar Reguieg	(signed)
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	Dr. Said Abdulaati	(signed)
Arab Republic of Egypt	Dr. Mostafa El-Feki	(signed)
Republic of Sudan	Abdel Ghaffar Hassan	(signed)
Lebanon	Samir Hobeica	(signed)
Kingdom of Morocco	Abderrahim Benmoussa	(signed)
Syrian Arab Republic	Riad Siage	(signed)
Republic of Yemen	Hassan Mohamed Makki	(signed)
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia	Omar Mohammed Kurdi	(signed)
Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan	Malek Twal	(signed)
State of Qatar	Saleh Al-Bouanin	(signed)
Iraq	Neama Faris	(signed)
United Arab Emirates	Ahmad Rashed Al-Dosari	(signed)
Tunisia	Nabil Amar	(signed)

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM ON THE PARTICIPATION OF PALESTINE IN THE WORK OF THE INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY

1. Palestine has been participating in the work of the Agency as an observer pursuant to resolution GC(XX)/RES/334 adopted by the Agency's General Conference on 23 September 1976.

2. Palestine is a full member of the League of Arab States, the Organization of the Islamic Conference, the Non-Aligned Movement, and the Group of 77 and China.

3. On 7 July 1998, the United Nations General Assembly adopted its resolution A/RES/52/250 concerning the granting to Palestine of certain additional privileges and rights relating to its participation in the work of the United Nations.

4. In keeping with the resolution adopted by the United Nations General Assembly concerning the granting to Palestine of certain additional privileges and rights relating to its participation in the work of the United Nations and in accordance with the provisions of the attached United Nations General Assembly resolution, it is necessary for the Agency's General Conference to adopt a resolution in order to apply the substance of the General Assembly's resolution to the participation of Palestine in the work of the Agency.

UNITED
NATIONS

A

General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/RES/52/250
13 July 1998

Fifty-second session
Agenda item 36

RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

[without reference to a Main Committee (A/52/L.53/Rev.2 and Add.1)]

52/250. Participation of Palestine in the work of the United Nations

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 181 (II) of 29 November 1947, in which, *inter alia*, it recommended the partition of Palestine into a Jewish State and an Arab State, with Jerusalem as a *corpus separatum*,

Recalling also its resolution 3237 (XXIX) of 22 November 1974, by which it granted observer status to the Palestine Liberation Organization,

Recalling further its resolution 43/160 A of 9 December 1988, adopted under the item entitled "Observer status of national liberation movements recognized by the Organization of African Unity and/or by the League of Arab States", in which it decided that the Palestine Liberation Organization was entitled to have its communications issued and circulated as official documents of the United Nations,

Recalling its resolution 43/177 of 15 December 1988, in which it acknowledged the proclamation of the State of Palestine by the Palestine National Council on 15 November 1988 and decided that the designation "Palestine" should be used in place of the designation "Palestine Liberation Organization" in the United Nations system,

Recalling also its resolutions 49/12 A of 9 November 1994 and 49/12 B of 24 May 1995, through which, *inter alia*, arrangements for the special commemorative meeting of the General Assembly on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, in addition to applying to all Member and observer States, were also applied to Palestine, in its capacity as observer, including in the organizing process of the list of speakers for the commemorative meeting,

Recalling further that Palestine enjoys full membership in the Group of Asian States and the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia,

Aware that Palestine is a full member of the League of Arab States, the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, the Organization of the Islamic Conference, and the Group of 77 and China,

Aware also that general democratic Palestinian elections were held on 20 January 1996 and that the Palestinian Authority was established on part of the occupied Palestinian territory,

Desirous of contributing to the achievement of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, thus attaining a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East,

1. *Decides* to confer upon Palestine, in its capacity as observer, and as contained in the annex to the present resolution, additional rights and privileges of participation in the sessions and work of the General Assembly and the international conferences convened under the auspices of the Assembly or other organs of the United Nations, as well as in United Nations conferences;

2. *Requests* the Secretary-General to inform the General Assembly, within the current session, about the implementation of the modalities annexed to the present resolution.

89th plenary meeting
7 July 1998

ANNEX

The additional rights and privileges of participation of Palestine shall be effected through the following modalities, without prejudice to the existing rights and privileges:

1. The right to participate in the general debate of the General Assembly.

2. Without prejudice to the priority of Member States, Palestine shall have the right of inscription on the list of speakers under agenda items other than Palestinian and Middle East issues at any plenary meeting of the General Assembly, after the last Member State inscribed on the list of that meeting.

3. The right of reply.

4. The right to raise points of order related to the proceedings on Palestinian and Middle East issues, provided that the right to raise such a point of order shall not include the right to challenge the decision of the presiding officer.

5. The right to co-sponsor draft resolutions and decisions on Palestinian and Middle East issues. Such draft resolutions and decisions shall be put to a vote only upon request from a Member State.

6. The right to make interventions, with a precursory explanation or the recall of relevant General Assembly resolutions being made only once by the President of the General Assembly at the start of each session of the Assembly.

7. Seating for Palestine shall be arranged immediately after non-member States and before the other observers; and with the allocation of six seats in the General Assembly Hall.

8. Palestine shall not have the right to vote or to put forward candidates.

International Atomic Energy Agency
GENERAL CONFERENCE
Forty-second regular session

GC

GC(42)/3
19 June 1998

GENERAL Distr.
Original: ENGLISH and FRENCH

APPLICATIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP OF THE AGENCY

Application by Benin

Recommendation by the Board of Governors

1. On 3 June 1998 the following letter from the Minister for Foreign Affairs and for Co-operation of Benin was communicated to the Board:

> "On behalf of the Government of the Republic of Benin I have the honour to submit an application for membership of the International Atomic Energy Agency.
>
> I should like to assure you that the Republic of Benin is prepared to discharge the obligations of Members of the Agency and to act in accordance with the aims and principles of the Charter of the United Nations."

2. On 8 June 1998 the Board considered this application for membership of the Agency in the light of Article IV.B of the Statute, and determined that Benin was able and willing to carry out the obligations of membership of the Agency and to act in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. The Board recommends the Conference to approve Benin for membership of the Agency, and submits the draft resolution overleaf for the consideration of the Conference.

98-02206

For reasons of economy, this document has been printed in a limited number.
Delegates are kindly requested to bring their copies of documents to meetings.

APPLICATION BY BENIN FOR MEMBERSHIP OF THE AGENCY

The General Conference,

(a) Having received the recommendation of the Board of Governors that Benin should be approved for membership of the Agency,[:] and

(b) Having considered the application of Benin for membership in the light of Article IV.B of the Statute,

1. Approves Benin for membership of the Agency; and

2. Determines, pursuant to Financial Regulation 5.09[::], that in the event of Benin becoming a Member of the Agency during the remainder of 1998 or in 1999, it shall be assessed as appropriate:

(a) For an advance or advances to the Working Capital Fund, in accordance with Financial Regulation 7.04[::]; and

(b) For a contribution or contributions towards the Agency's Regular Budget, in accordance with the principles and arrangements the Conference has established for the assessment of Members for such contributions[:::].

[:] GC(42)/3 para 2.

[::] INFCIRC/8/Rev.2.

[:::] Resolutions GC(III)/RES/50, GC(XXXI)/RES/351, and GC(39)/RES/11.

International Atomic Energy Agency
GENERAL CONFERENCE

GC

GC(42)/4
28 August 1998

GENERAL Distr.
Original: ENGLISH

Forty-second regular session of the General Conference
Item 5(d) of the provisional agenda
(GC(42)/2)

STREAMLINING THE WORK OF THE GENERAL CONFERENCE

1. This document was first presented to the Board of Governors for its consideration at its March 1998 session. The Board, inter alia, concluded that the document formed a good basis for streamlining the work of the General Conference and requested that the document be revised in the light of comments made at that session for further consideration by the Board. At its June session, the Board considered and endorsed the recommendations contained in the revised document and requested that they be transmitted to the General Conference for its consideration.

2. Almost ten years have elapsed since the review of the working practices of the General Conference, when an inter-sessional working group of the General Conference was set up in 1988 under the Chairmanship of Ambassador Halim of Malaysia, President of the thirty-second regular session of the General Conference in 1988. The recommendations of the working group (document GC(XXXIII)/GEN/77 of 13 July 1989) were adopted by the General Conference on 28 September 1989 (see GC(XXXIII)/DEC/8). During the discussion of the working group's report in the General Committee, a suggestion was made that the recommendations be reviewed in about five years' time in the light of experience in their implementation.

3. In the light of repeated calls for the revitalization and reorganisation and the streamlining of the policy-making organs of the United Nations and its specialised agencies, some UN system organisations have undertaken reviews to better enable them to fulfil their purposes and to meet the needs and requirements of Member States.

4. The time is propitious for another review of the practices of the IAEA's General Conference. In his closing statement the President of the 1997 regular session of the General Conference, Mr. Niewodniczanski of Poland, also referred to the need to review some aspects of the General Conference.

98-02852

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5. As identified by the President of the 1997 regular session, the areas where reform and streamlining could most obviously and usefully take place relate largely to the practical conduct of business in the General Conference. As has been welcomed by several Board members, it should be emphasised that the streamlining measures proposed in this paper do not require any changes to the Agency's Statute or the Rules of Procedure of the General Conference and accordingly need not undergo lengthy procedures prior to their implementation.

6. Certain of the issues identified in this review arise from time management concerns resulting from the fact that the General Conference tends to be limited to only five days' duration. At the same time, it must be recognised that the relative brevity of the General Conference itself imposes significant limits on the scope of any reforms which may be introduced.

7. As to the functional changes which may be introduced into the conduct of the General Conference, these may be grouped under the following headings.

(a) Pre-session consultations

8. The 1988 inter-sessional working group recommended that facilities be provided for group meetings during the weekend preceding the start of each regular session, with a view to achieving early agreement on various organisational matters, and that the General Conference urge Member States to avail themselves of these facilities. Arrangements subsequently made by the Secretariat to enable area groups to meet in this manner, in order to reach agreement on matters such as the composition of the General Committee and on candidates for election to the Board, have not been fully utilised by delegations and area groups. As a result, reaching agreement on these matters during sessions has been subject to delays, and has on occasion run well into the first day of the Conference, despite endeavours on the part of the Secretariat to avoid this.

9. There remains an important need to have pre-session consultations, either formal or informal, institutionalised into the working arrangements for the Conference. These may be undertaken by the area groups. In addition to attempting to reach basic agreement on matters such as elections to the Board and allocation of seats in the General Committee, such consultations could also be used by interested delegations to seek broad support on draft resolutions which they intend to present to the Conference and for preliminary discussions on contentious draft resolutions. Current arrangements as they have worked in practice are not satisfactory, and present weekend consultation sessions are not enough.

10. Given this situation, area groups could be convened in advance of the formal opening of the General Conference to allow some substantive pre-Conference progress to be achieved. It is therefore proposed that, in the margins of the (pre-General Conference) September session of the Board, a preliminary meeting of the coordinators of the eight area groups be convened by the Secretariat, with a view to holding initial consultations on organisational aspects of the Conference. This could be followed up by meetings of the area groups themselves in the weekend preceding the Conference.

11. While account must be taken of the position of Member States who do not have permanent representation in Vienna, and the additional administrative burdens which more effectively structured pre-session consultations may therefore place on them, the General Conference could strongly urge Member States to avail themselves of this facility. The alternative of beginning regular sessions on a Tuesday or Wednesday and ending the following Monday or Tuesday is not, for economic reasons, feasible or acceptable to many delegations. For the same reason, longer sessions of ten days or more are not likely to enjoy broad support among delegations.

(b) Agenda

12. The Agenda could be rationalised by the greater use of clustering of related items. This may be done under such headings as:

(i) Activities and programmes of the Agency:
- Medium-Term Perspective;
- Annual Report, etc.

(ii) Safety;

(iii) Nuclear Verification;

(iv) Technical Co-operation and technology transfer;

(v) Statutory and legal matters:
- review of Article VI;
- co-operation agreements;
- loss of voting rights;

(vi) Administrative and financial matters:
- annual budget;
- scale of assessment;
- status of contributions, etc.

13. Clustering should not dilute the importance of any particular item or lead to important items being submerged in a more generalised subject-matter. Rather, it should be seen as an attempt to permit matters to be dealt with more systematically and rationally, and by allowing Members to focus on principles common to a number of items without prejudice to their separate identity.

14. Further, the Agenda could benefit from the biennialisation of certain agenda items, rather than having them taken up each year as is currently the case for most items. Relevant in this regard are the Guidelines on the Rationalisation of the Agenda of the General Assembly, which the Assembly intends, by resolution 51/241 of 31 July 1997, to use as the basis for rationalising and streamlining the agenda. The Guidelines envisage, inter alia, the clustering of items covering related matters and the biennialisation of items. It must be

recognised, however, that the opportunity for large-scale clustering and rationalisation of the agenda is somewhat limited, given the relatively small number of items on the General Conference agenda.

(c) General debate

(i) Thematic focus

15. The general debate would benefit from greater focusing on the Agency's programme and orientation, as was its original rationale, in order to enhance the quality of the discussion, encourage more active participation by delegates and improve public awareness and interest. The practice of other UN system organisations may be noted in this regard. At the World Health Assembly of the World Health Organisation (WHO), statements are expected to focus on the theme of "The world health report". At the Conference of the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), statements are also expected to be thematic and to focus on the "State of Food and Agriculture in the World". Consideration could in this context be given to the introduction of a broadly similar "World Nuclear Report", as a special part of the Annual Report. The World Nuclear Report could contain a description of the present situation of nuclear energy in the world (including, for example, information on the number of reactors, the safeguards situation, safety issues including a description of the status of waste and radiation protection, highlights in Technical Co-operation), plus an outlook towards the future development of nuclear energy.

16. Although by Article V.D of the Statute, the General Conference is not limited in the subject matter of its debate, the Conference could still exercise a measure of self-regulation by voluntarily focusing on a particular theme or themes, which could be born out of discussions in the Board of Governors on the priorities set in the medium term strategy/perspective of the Agency. Appropriate thematic focus could also encourage greater involvement on the part of leading scientific members of delegations in the central activities of the Conference.

17. In seeking greater thematic focus, however, recognition must be given to the position of those states which have little opportunity to participate in the work of the Agency, save in the context of the General Conference, and who accordingly may feel that this is the only forum available during the year to express positions and opinions on issues of importance to them. Care in the choice of themes identified may assist in accommodating states in this position. Suggested themes should be generic and not narrowly focused. The intention would be to provide the guidance necessary to engender and sustain a real debate, rather than having a series of independently prepared statements.

(ii) Report on scientific meetings

18. It is also considered essential to introduce a higher degree of scientific focus in the work of the General Conference. For example, a Scientific Forum may be established, running during the Conference and involving the active participation of the specialist members

of the delegations and other scientists who do not at present engage themselves in the main activities of the Conference. The Scientific Forum, at which various aspects of the Agency's programme could be dealt with from a more technical perspective, would permit broad-ranging scientific discussions and would replace the current scientific sessions. It is envisaged that the Forum take place for three days beginning on the second day (Tuesday) of the regular session. The outcome of the Scientific Forum's discussions could be the subject of a report - without debate - to the Plenary.

19. Already for this year's session of the General Conference (42nd regular session), as a result of the wide support which this particular recommendation received at the March and June sessions of the Board, the Director General has taken steps to restructure the scientific programme accordingly.

(iii) Time limits on speeches

20. The 1988 working group had recommended that the Conference explicitly authorise the President to limit speeches to a maximum duration of 15 minutes. Although there is a long-standing arrangement that statements in the general debate should not exceed 15 minutes, many delegates do not abide by this and consequently plenary meetings extend beyond schedule. Board members have expressed their support for measures to restrict excessively lengthy speeches, in order both to save valuable time and to give added certainty to the speakers' list schedule. Accordingly, it is recommended that there should be a limitation of the time allowed speakers to 15 minutes in the plenary and five minutes in committee sessions. Effective enforcement of this is recommended. To this end, it is hoped that a warning light on the speaker's desk would assist in the preparation and delivery of shorter speeches. A procedure could be considered whereby additional statements by delegates on, for example, aspects of their national programmes could, with the approval of the Conference, be reserved for distribution to delegations. Such additional statements could thereafter be published in a separate single document entitled 'Written Statements'. Rights of reply will still be available in respect of these Written Statements.

21. As regards the practice in other UN system organisations, delegates to the World Health Assembly of the WHO are requested to limit their statements to five minutes, though delegates wishing to do so may submit prepared statements of not more than 600 words for inclusion in the verbatim records of plenary meetings. The Conference of the FAO, which meets biennially, sets a limit of five minutes each to general statements.

(iv) Speakers' list

22. While the recommendations of the 1988 working group on the procedure for drawing up the speakers' list have been largely successfully implemented, there remains the problem of lengthy delays in the speaking schedule. This has led to sessions being extended considerably and speakers being transferred to the following day's list, with consequent additional delays. The completion of a day's list should be rigorously adhered to and the

practice avoided of transferring speakers to a subsequent day. As mentioned in paragraph 20 above, adherence to time limits on speeches will assist in this.

(v) Electronic voting

23. Voting, whether by a show of hands, roll-call voting or balloting, can take up a considerable amount of time in the plenary sessions and the installation of an electronic voting system with display panel would significantly reduce the time involved. It is suggested that, in consultation with the other organisations involved who use the facilities of the Austria Centre, discussions take place with the host authorities with a view to installation of an appropriate system, with due consideration given to the cost factor. In view of the financial implications for the host authorities in installing such equipment, it may be possible for this to be done on an ad hoc or temporary basis.

Summary of findings and recommendations

24. These recommendations focus on the practical conduct of business in the General Conference and are restricted to proposals which may be introduced without necessitating a ndments to the Agency's Statute or the Rules of Procedure of the General Conference:

- there is an important need to institutionalise pre-session consultations to consider a variety of matters, which in practice should take place on the weekend preceding the start of the regular session; these may be initiated by means of an initial organisational meeting of area groups held at the (pre-General Conference) September session of the Board, to be followed up in the weekend preceding the Conference;

- the agenda could be rationalised by the judicious use of the clustering of related items and the biennialisation of certain items;

- the general debate should be given a more specific focus by adherence to one or more themes, in order to enhance the quality of the discussion, encourage more active participation by delegates in effective debate and improve public interest; in this connection, consideration could be given to the institution of a World Nuclear Report, on an annual or biennial basis, combining a description of the present situation of nuclear energy in the world with an outlook towards the future development of nuclear energy. This Report could take the form of a section of the Annual Report, or it could be produced as a separate document.

- to enable maximum participation by delegates whose interests are mainly scientific, efforts should be made to have more scientific input into the work of the Conference itself. Principally, a Scientific Forum, allowing for consideration of the Agency's programme from a specifically technical perspective, could run for three days of the General Conference (beginning on the second day), reporting without debate to the Plenary. In view of the Board's explicit endorsement of this particular proposal, the scientific programme for this year's General Conference has been restructured accordingly;

- length of speeches should be strictly limited to a maximum of 15 minutes in the plenary and 5 minutes in committee sessions. Additional statements could, with the approval of the Conference, be reserved for distribution to delegates and subsequently published separately as 'Written Statements';

- completion of a day's schedule of speakers should be rigorously adhered to and the practice of transferring speakers to a subsequent day should be avoided;

- in view of the considerable amount of time taken by voting, the host authority should be approached with a view to installing an electronic voting system.

25. It is evident that the proposals suggested above can be effective only with the co-operation and self-restraint of all Member States, working through the General Conference and supporting the President of the Conference and the Committee Chairs to enforce the powers available to them.

RECOMMENDED ACTION BY THE GENERAL CONFERENCE

26. The General Conference may wish to approve the review of the working practices of the General Conference in this document together with the recommendations contained therein.